**Thompson V. Oklahoma**

**I**n 1983, when he was fifteen years old, William Wayne Thompson had a brother-in-law named Charles Keene. Keene was married to Thompson's sister, Vicki, whom Keene beat and abused. Thompson decided to end his sister's suffering.

On the night of January 22, 1983, Thompson left his mother's house with his half-brother and two friends to kill Charles Keene. In the early morning hours of January 23, a neighbor named Malcom "Possum" Brown was awakened by the sound of a gunshot on his porch. Someone pounded on Brown's door shouting, "Possum, open the door, let me in. They're going to kill me." Brown called the police and then opened the door to see Keene being beaten by four men. Before the police arrived, the four men took Keene away in a car.

Thompson and his friends shot Keene twice, cut his throat, chest, and stomach, broke one of his legs, chained him to a concrete block, and threw him into the Washita River. One of Thompson's friends said Thompson cut Keene "so the fish could eat his body." Authorities did not find Keene's body until almost four weeks after the murder.